

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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AMEMBASSY BERLIN

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BONN 16481

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV PFOR WB GE US UK FR GW

SUBJECT: INNER-GERMAN NEGOTIATIONS: TELTOW CANAL

REFS: (A) STATE 236433; (B) BONN 16284

SUMMARY. BEFORE AGREEING THAT THE SENAT MAY OPEN TALKS WITH THE GDR ON TELTOW, THE FRENCH CONTINUE TO INSIST THAT THE FRG MUST INFORM THE ALLIES OFFICIALLY THAT GAUS HAS MADE CLEAR TO THE GDR THE LIMITATIONS ON THE AUTHORITY OF THE SENAT. HAVING MADE THE INSTRUCTED BILATERAL DEMARCHE TO THE FRENCH, WE BELIEVE IT NOW PREFERABLE TO ALLOW THE GERMANS AND THE FRENCH TO SORT THIS OUT BETWEEN THEMSELVES. THE US POSITION IS CLEAR BOTH TO THE SENAT AND TO THE FRG. END SUMMARY.

1. AS INSTRUCTED REFTEL (A), EMBOFFS MET WITH FRENCH BONN GROUP REP (BOISSIEU) OCTOBER 6 TO TRY TO PERSUADE HIM TO LIFT FRENCH OBJECTIONS TO OPENING OF SENAT-GDR TECHNICAL TALKS. IN ADDITION TO ARGUMENTS IN REFTEL, CONFIDENTIAL

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WE POINTED OUT (A) THAT IN INSISTING ON KNOWING THE

RESULTS OF THE GAUS-SCHLIMPER TALKS BEFORE PERMITTING THE SENAT TO EXERCISE THE MANDATE GIVEN IT IN BK/L (75) 31, THE FRENCH APPEARED TO BE ADDING NEW CONDITIONS; (B) THAT WE SAW NO HARM IN LETTING THE SENAT TEST THE WATER, GIVEN THE BUILT-IN ALLIED CONTROLS OVER PREVENTING THE NEGOTIATIONS FROM GETTING OUT OF HAND; AND (C) THAT IT WOULD BE PREFERABLE TO SHIFT THE IRE OF THE SENAT FROM THE ALLIES TO THE GDR, IF INITIAL CONTACT SHOWED THAT THE GDR WAS UNWILLING TO NEGOTIATE WITH THE SENAT ONLY ON TECHNICAL MATTERS.

2. BOISSIEU DISPUTED OUR CONTENTION THAT THE FRENCH WERE ADDING A NEW CONDITION TO THE MANDATE, INSISTING THAT, WHEN THE ALLIES IN JUNE OBTAINED AN FRG COMMITMENT THAT GAUS WOULD INFORM THE GDR OF THE LIMITS TO THE NEGOTIATING AUTHORITY OF THE SENAT, IT WAS IMPLICIT THAT THE FRG WOULD INFORM THE ALLIES OF THE GDR REACTION. AS FOR OUR CONTENTION THAT THERE WOULD BE NO HARM IN INITIAL SENAT-GDR CONTACTS, BOISSIEU SAID HE FORESAW A SITUATION IN WHICH THE GDR WOULD STRING THE SENAT ALONG FOR SIX MONTHS OR SO, GRADUALLY WORKING OUT A NEGOTIATED PACKAGE WHICH WOULD THEN BE PRESENTED TO THE ALLIES AS A FAIT ACCOMPLI. AS FOR OUR FINAL ARGUMENT, BOISSIEU COMMENTED THAT SENAT ANNOYANCE WAS DIRECTED NOT AT THE ALLIES BUT AT THE FRENCH, AND HE APPEARED UNCONCERNED.

3. BOISSIEU ALSO POINTED OUT THAT IT IS ONLY THE SENAT AND NOT THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT WHICH IS PRESSING THE ALLIES. HE CLAIMED TO HAVE BEEN TOLD BY A FOREIGN OFFICE SOURCE THAT FONMIN GENSCHER HIMSELF AGREED THAT IT WOULD BE UNDESIRABLE FOR THE PROPOSED SENAT-GDR TALKS TO START ON OCTOBER 8. THIS SAME SOURCE HAD DENIED TO BOISSIEU THE STATEMENT MADE BY SENAT CHANCELLERY CHIEF HERZ TO ALLIED LIAISON OFFICERS (USBER 1988) THAT THE FRG HAD LINKED AGREEMENT ON REOPENING THE TELTOW CANAL TO THE ANNUAL LUMP SUM PAYMENT AGREEMENT. THE FRENCH HAVE CONCLUDED THAT THE FRG ITSELF ATTACHES VERY LITTLE PRIORITY TO THE TELTOW CANAL AND DOES NOT INTEND TO EXPEND ANY POLITICAL CAPITAL ON IT. THEY ARE THERE-
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FORE PREPARED TO SIT TIGHT UNTIL THE FRG COMES TO THE ALLIES AND CONFIRMS THAT GAUS HAS, AS PROMISED, INFORMED THE GDR OF ITS INTENTION TO NEGOTIATE THE TRANSIT REGIME FOR THE CANAL AND OF THE LIMITATIONS ON THE SENAT'S AUTHORITY. SHOULD THE FRG CONFIRM OUR SUSPICIONS THAT THE GDR HAS REJECTED THIS SCENARIO, BUT TELL US THAT THE FRG NEVERTHELESS BELIEVES IT IS WORTH TESTING THE FIRMNES OF THE GDR POSITION BY ATTEMPTING

TO LAUNCH EXPLORATORY TECHNICAL TALKS AT THE SENAT-GDR
LEVEL, THE ALLIES WOULD BE FACED WITH A NEW SITUATION
TO BE CONSIDERED AT THAT TIME.

4. AT THE OCTOBER 6 BONN GROUP MEETING, THE FRG REP
(LUECKING) HAD STATED THAT AN INTER-MINISTERIAL MEETING

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 BONN 16481

WOULD BE HELD IN BONN OCTOBER 7 TO REVIEW THE STATUS OF
INNER-GERMAN NEGOTIATIONS AND THAT THE FOREIGN OFFICE
WOULD BE IN A POSITION TO BRIEF THE ALLIES MORE FULLY
AT THE OCTOBER 9 BONN GROUP MEETING ON THE STATUS OF
THESE NEGOTIATIONS. BOISSIEU STATED THAT THE FRENCH
WOULD NOT LIFT THEIR HOLD ON THE TELTOW TALKS UNTIL
AFTER THAT MEETING, AT WHICH IT SEEMED LIKELY THAT WE
WOULD RECEIVE FULLER INFORMATION ON THE GAUS-SCHLIMPER
DISCUSSION OF TELTOW.

5. COMMENT: BOISSIEU IS CORRECT IN POINTING OUT THAT THERE IS AT PRESENT ABSOLUTELY NO PRESSURE FROM THE FRG ON THIS ISSUE. WHILE WE CONTINUE TO BELIEVE, AS WE ARGUED TO BOISSIEU,, THAT THE CONTROLS BUILT INTO BK/L (75) 31 ARE SUFFICIENT TO PROTECT ALLIED INTERESTS AND REGRET OUR INABILITY TO PERSUADE HIM, WE DOUBT THAT THERE IS ANY US INTEREST IN CONTINUING TO WORK BILATERALLY ON THE FRENCH. IT HAS CONFIDENTIAL

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BEEN CLEAR ALL ALONG, BOTH TO THE SENAT AND TO THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT, THAT THE DELAY IS NOT AN ALLIED PROBLEM BUT STRICTLY A FRENCH ONE. WE BELIEVE IT PREFERABLE AT THIS POINT TO ALLOW THE FRENCH AND THE GERMANS TO TRY TO SORT IT OUT BETWEEN THEMSELVES. HILLENBRAND

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